

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4 and 9-12 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found in original claim 3, which has been canceled.

Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 1, 2, 4-15 and 18 will be pending.

Claims 1-8, 10 and 12-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Winckler '157.

The present invention produces a powder-coated support which exhibits less swelling and has excellent smoothness and glossiness. The method for producing a powder-coated support according to independent claims 1 and 12 includes a step of hot-pressing a powdery resin composition on a base paper. In claims 1 and 12, the hot-pressing step comprises subjecting the coated layer of the powdery resin composition on the base paper to hot-pressing and then cooling with a belt member and a roller of a powder coating machine that can cool and thereby remove an article, and removing the coated layer on the base paper from the belt member (i.e. heat and cool the coated layer in the condition of pressing with a belt member and a roller).

In contrast, Winckler '157 describes a powder coating system using a blend material comprising a macrocyclic polyester oligomer and a polymerization catalyst (col. 23, lines 25-28). Winckler '157 discloses using a powder coating to deposit a uniform coating of powder material onto a receiving substrate (i.e., paper) (col. 23, lines 7-10). In Winckler '157, the powder is then heated or treated in other ways to make the powder adhere to or soak into the receiving substrate (col. 23, lines 12-14). However, a belt member and a roller are not used in the hot and cool step

(see Fig. 12). Therefore, a powder-coated support with excellent smoothness and glossiness, as in the present invention, can never be obtained.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-8, 10 and 12-13 are not anticipated or rendered obvious by Winckler '157. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 9, 11, 14-15 and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Winckler '157.

As discussed above with respect to the § 102 rejection, in Winckler '157 a belt member and a roller are not used in the hot and cool step (see Fig. 12). Therefore, a powder-coated support with excellent smoothness and glossiness, as in the present invention, can never be obtained by the powder coating system disclosed in Winckler '157.

The Examiner acknowledges that Winckler '157 does not disclose the features claimed in Applicants' claims 9, 11, 14, 15 and 18. However, the Examiner takes the position that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to vary values such as in claims 9, 11, 14, 15, and 18 since it would optimize process conditions and improve the properties of the resulting product.

Although Winckler '157 discloses that thermoplastic resin powders are conventionally used as powder coatings, Winckler '157 further discloses that, "thermoplastic preregs are difficult to use because conventional thermoplastic materials have high melt viscosity and do not wet out fibers well and have long heat up and cool down cycles when making parts. Thus, conventional thermoplastic materials are difficult to use to produce high quality composites."

(col. 23, lines 19-24). Therefore, Winckler '157 disparages the use of powdery resin compositions containing thermoplastic resins for coating substrates such as paper (col. 23, 14-24).

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that contrary to the Examiner's assertion, it would not be obvious to optimize these process conditions and improve the properties in the resulting product because Winckler '157 teaches away from the claimed resulting product.

Additionally, with respect to the § 103 rejection of claim 18, the Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to use a paper coated product of Winckler '157 as an electrophotographic base material. However, Winckler '157 does not disclose or suggest using a powder-coated support in an electrophotographic material and the Examiner has not provided any reasoning why it would have been obvious based on the teachings of Winckler '157. Therefore, Applicants submit that the Examiner has not carried his burden of establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Moreover, as discussed above, Winckler '157 disparages the use of powdery resin compositions containing thermoplastic resins for coating substrates such as paper. Therefore, contrary to the Examiner's assertion, it would not be obvious to optimize these process conditions and improve the properties in the resulting product because Winckler '157 teaches away from an electrophotographic material comprising a powder coated support, wherein the powder coated support is produced by applying to at least one side of a base paper a powdery resin composition containing at least a thermoplastic resin.

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Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 9, 11, 14-15 and 18 would not be obvious based on Winckler '157. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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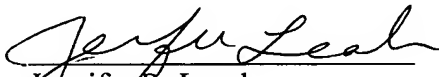
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